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SBA-NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF GAY AND LESBIAN COMMUNITY CENTERS PARTNERSHIP TO FOCUS ON SMALL BUSINESS INFORMATION

WASHINGTON - U. S. Small Business Administration (SBA) Administrator Aida Alvarez will sign a partnership agreement Thursday with the National Association of Gay and Lesbian Community Centers (NAGLCC) in Los Angeles. The partnership is intended to increase the participation of lesbian- and gay-owned small businesses in SBA's capital-access, contract procurement and technical assistance programs.

Under the agreement, SBA will work closely with 106 gay and lesbian community centers in 36 states to disseminate information about SBA's small business assistance programs and services to America's gay and lesbian small business owners and potential entrepreneurs.

"The Small Business Administration is absolutely committed to the idea that every citizen deserves an opportunity for full participation in the American dream," said Administrator Alvarez. **"This agreement will help us get this message out to the gay and lesbian community that the tools SBA offers are available to anyone with the creativity and determination to use them to build a business."**

As part of the agreement, SBA District Offices and NAGLCC members around the country will conduct "Meet-the-Lender" forums, orientation sessions on SBA interactive assistance for small businesses, and workshops on the many loan and government contract procurement programs and services available.

"SBA's job is helping people start and grow businesses to provide jobs, shore up neighborhoods and stabilize communities," the Administrator said. **"That goes for every community."**

The two-year agreement will be signed today at a 1 p.m. news conference at the Los Angeles Gay and Lesbian Community Center, 1125 North McCadden Place, in the Village at Ed Gould Plaza.

*For more information about all of SBA's programs for small businesses, call the SBA Answer Desk at 1-**800-U-ASK-SBA**, or visit the SBA's extensive Web site at www.sba.gov.*

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